AMENDED CLAIM SET:

1. – 20. (cancelled).

21. (new) A denitrifying composition for microbially removing nitrate nitrogen from water, said composition comprising particles of calcium carbonate dispersed in sulfur by heating and dispersing calcium carbonate particles in melted sulfur and solidifying the dispersion by cooling, wherein a microporous substance is additionally dispersed in the sulfur and wherein the ratio by weight of sulfur to calcium carbonate is 1:0.3 to 1:3.

22. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, comprising 10 parts by weight of sulfur, 10-15 parts by weight of calcium carbonate, and 1-3 parts by weight of a microporous substance.

23. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, wherein said sulfur is amorphous sulfur.

24. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, wherein the shape of said composition is granular, massive, or molded.

25. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, wherein said microporous substance is carbon derived from rice hull.

26. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, wherein said microporous substance is kieselguhr.

27. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 21, wherein said microporous substance is a cation exchanger.

28. (new) The denitrifying composition of claim 27, wherein said cation exchanger is selected from the group consisting of natural zeolites, synthetic zeolites, and bentonite.

29. (new) A denitrifying material comprising a mixture of a denitrifying composition of claim 21 and mineral fibers.

30. (new) The denitrifying material of claim 29, wherein said mineral fibers are rock wool.

31. (new) A method of decreasing the nitrate nitrogen concentration of water which comprises the step of contacting water containing nitrate ions with

the composition of claim 21.

32. (new) A method of decreasing nitrate nitrogen concentration of an effluent selected from the group consisting of factory effluent, sewage effluent, and agricultural effluent, which method comprises the steps of placing the composition of claim 21 in a cage or a net to provide a denitrifying assembly and immersing the denitrifying assembly in said effluent.

33. (new) A method of decreasing nitrate nitrogen concentration of an effluent selected from the group consisting of factory effluent, sewage effluent, and agricultural effluent, which method comprises the steps of packing a column with the composition of claim 21 to provide a denitrifying assembly and passing said effluent through said denitrifying assembly.

34. (new) A method of decreasing nitrate nitrogen concentration of an effluent selected from the group consisting of factory effluent, sewage effluent, and agricultural effluent, which method comprises the steps of dispersing the composition of claim 21 in a tank and bringing said effluent into contact with said composition in said tank.